



the **RaRa Rag**

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NO. 5

QRP Madness in January

By Tim Magee, WB2KAO
Larry Wallnau, W2ZEY

Bill Hopkins, AA2YV, will head an exciting multi-presenter QRP program at the January general membership meeting. Bill will show us why QRP has been an ongoing part of amateur radio. For many hams, Bill explains, QRP ops have been a lifetime pursuit.

Bill will discuss the equipment commonly used for low-power operation, such as homebrew Tuna Tin rigs and retail kits like the Sierra Norcal and Elecraft. One of Bill's favorite homebrew rigs is based on the Tuna Tin 2. The '2' designates the number of transistors in this little brute. He modified his Tin so that it is now a 2 + 1, having an extra transistor which is part of the keyer circuitry. This rig puts out 250 MW. Bill was using it during a QSO with a ham in Texas. He also will discuss building and troubleshooting QRP rigs. Pamphlets will be provided with schematics and websites for kits.

One of the interesting possibilities with QRP is that the pint-sized equipment can be readily packed and set up in a jiffy when traveling. (See the Sidebar containing Bill's email confirming just such a QSO.)

Perhaps most important, there will be QRP demonstrations for PSK, CW, and SSB. Rigs will be set up and volunteers at other QTHs will be prepared to respond.

If you own QRP equipment, bring it to the meeting. Bill hopes to have time for "show-and-tell." If you are not going to fire up your rig, and plan to have it at the meeting for display only, then you might want to put a "Please Do Not Touch" sign on your equipment.

Peter Fournia, W2SKY, and Jon Dickason, N2JAC, will present an unusual high-tech demonstration. They are keeping a lid on the nature of their presentation, so bring a hardhat, a lead barrier, and iodine tablets.

Finally, in a generous gesture, Bill Hopkins will sponsor a raffle of QRP equipment and books.

Sidebar – *QRP Madness in January*

QRP, Chicago

Bill Hopkins, AA2YV

December 2004; Dear Pat, KI5CT in Onida SD,

Am sending this short note along with my QSL card cuz I thought you'd like to hear about my setup. I was operating QRP portable from the second story of a new brick apartment building in Chicago, right off of Western and Milwaukee Avenues about 5 miles west-northwest of the city center. (The Sears tower and all the other bigger buildings were easily visible from the roof.

(QRP continued on Page 3)

SILENT KEYS

William H. DeWitt, W2DD

November 22, 2004

Raymond R. Pickens, WA2MYG

November 24, 2004

John E. Levis, KB2FXI

December 3, 2004

RaRa MEETING

January 7, 2005

7:30 P.M.

Henrietta Fire Hall
3129 East Henrietta Road

QRP Madness

the **RARA RAG**

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RaRa Rag 2

Ray Pickens, WA2MYG - SK

by Brad Allen, KB2CHY

There is not enough space in any publication to express sufficiently all that Ray has done for amateur radio, but here is my humble attempt.

Ray was a giant among the Ham community. He did not mince words. He told you like it was – without pretense or sugarcoating. But there were many sides to Ray.

On any given day, many years ago, ANY new ham that got their license and first radio and decided to go on the very active 146.88 repeater would always encounter Ray. There were stories that he slept wearing earphones listening to dot-88. Ray was control operator for the dot-88 repeater for many years. He took on this role with gusto aiming to please those that gave him the responsibility. He was always on the air either via handheld or from his beloved "Big Red" for which he was so well known. Ray was so proud of his ham radio job as control operator that he gained a reputation of being a "Repeater Cop". As Ray would say "I don't pay no never mind".

I became a Ham in the early 80's and when given the proof that I had passed the test for my technician license, I was told, "Now you can go meet Ray" and so I did. I was not sure what to think at the first contact with him, I was no stranger to radio. I had an old crystal controlled drake TR-6. I had joined RARRA and received the codes for auto patch. I attempted to make a call to my home and after I released the mic, I heard the "beep" and a gruff voice tell me that my tones were not decoding. My signal was not strong enough, my audio was lousy and what the heck kind of radio did I have!! – There was total silence from me because I was not sure what to think or do. - A conversation ensued about what I what was going on, he laughed, and said come back when I had a radio. I did just that.

As I stated, there were many sides to Ray. He loved his family and it showed from the things he would do for them. Ray was a fix-it man; the guy could fix anything. He once had to get rid of a hum on the 88 repeater and he placed some greasy boards under the power supply to stop the hum. It worked and there was no longer a hum. Ray never liked computers much. We teased him many times about being able to do things with the RC 850 controller faster if he used a computer. He never did use one back then. We once told him that we were going to buy an old terminal and grease it, wrap it and place a monkey wrench on top. Knowing Ray, he would have thrown the monkey wrench right through it.

Ray for many years ran the talk-in station at the Rochester Hamfest until he was told to slow down after his first heart attack. He stopped the talk-in and I helped him with control functions on the repeater.

Ray was at a RRRA meeting that he stated earlier he wasn't sure he would attend. Ray's life was saved that night by some fast action of the membership of RRRA. He had a serious stomach ailment that placed him in the hospital and almost cost him his life. We are convinced that if he had stayed home that night, we would have lost him then. That incident was a little over 2 years ago.

In 1993, Ray was the first recipient of the first RRRA Ham of the Year Award. We actually put his name in every "Intermod" EXCEPT a few on the top. He always took the first one and mailed the rest. In his Intermod was Leonard Gessin's name. He was in on the whole thing. This had to be the best kept secret in town. People were actually congratulating Leonard on the air about the award. This was a classic wool over Ray's eyes. He stated he had no clue that it was him instead of Leonard.

When Ray retired, the real knowledge came out. In a few short month's after retiring, Ray got a computer. We welcomed him to the 20th century. Over the next few years, Ray became the "ON The Air GURU" of computers and operating systems. He even gave the great "Francesco" a run for his money right over the TV. He was an avid "Trekkie". He loved Star Wars and anything sci-fi. He was still doing the bulletins, control op functions for the new controller for '88, became a VE and took on license chairman for RARA. He also was an officer in his Legion Post.

Ray's passing is a great loss to all of us, the Ham community and most of all his family. I am sure I speak for the Ham community when I say he will be sorely missed by all of us. Rest in peace my friend, Rest in peace.

QRP continued from Page 1

Whenever the wind blew outside, my SWR would go up and down. Hi Hi. Since I was about 400 feet from the "L," the elevated train (subway) system of Chicago, which was actually the "Blue Line" out to O'Hare Airport, I would get this awful QRN ever 5 minutes, as the train went by.

Now to the antenna proper: The balcony was about 4 by 9 feet, plate steel with a hefty steel banister around it. So, I extended my collapsible fishing pole vertically in the center of the balcony, taped it to the top of the balcony and then draped the dipole wires left and right over the balcony side

railings. To do this, I fetched 4 plastic coat hangers, taped them to jut outwards (sideways) from the balcony and then taped the antenna wires to them as standoffs from the railing. The 3rd and 4th clothes hangers were taped similarly but close to the outside wall of the apartment. Then the remaining 5 feet or so just hung down close to the brick walls. The 3rd and 4th hangers prevented the dipole from reaching down to the neighbor's balcony below. So, it was a real "twisted pair," so to speak.

And yet, I made QSO's—with the little time I had to be on the air, with: you and with W7VWV (in Quincy Washington, one of my childhood QTH's), VE7CBU, K5AS, VE6TN, VE6EX, KC1XX, K7BG, K2XA and N2MF. Nice skips, eh? I guess I could have sent you my call as: AA2YV/P/9/QRP, but you knew that anyway.. It sure didn't hurt that that was the weekend of the CQ WW DX contest on CW. It's amazing how a contest will raise your QRP signal by 20 db at the receiving end.

I've QRPeed portable in Oregon, Spain, France and Germany, so I'll be packing up again pretty soon, I guess. Thanks for the bandwidth. 73's/72's de AA2YV, Bill Hopkins, Rochester NY, ...dit dit

January Calendar

- 7 - RaRa Meeting - 7:30 PM - Henrietta Fire Hall, 3129 East Henrietta Road
- 12 - BARK - Monthly Construction Meeting at KC2JKV, 1144 Peck Rd, Hilton
- 13 - RAPS - 7:30 PM, monthly meeting at RIT, Bldg.-76, Room 2150
- 14 - RVHFG - 7:30 PM, Monthly Meeting at Ogden Town Hall, 269 Ogden Center Rd.
- 15 - RaRa Testing - Room 2150, Bldg. 76 RIT, Registration 8:30 AM
- 18 - RDXA - 7:00 PM, monthly meeting at Gander Mountain, Jay Scutti Blvd.
- 21 - RRRA - 8:00 PM Monthly Meeting at Pittsford Town Hall, 11 South Main St.
- 26 - BARK - 7:00 PM, Monthly business meeting at Seymour Public Library, Brockport

Donation Wanted

by Donald Dunn, AB2NM

I am soliciting a donation of a Shortwave RECEIVER for Bishop Kearney High School. I met with the Spanish Language teacher a few weeks ago, and he would like to incorporate Spanish language Shortwave radio broadcasts into the curriculum.

So, I am, on behalf of BKHS, asking for a donation of a functional shortwave receiver with a BFO for SSB reception. Digital readout would be nifty, but not required. A vintage receiver (e.g. FRG-7 or similar) would be nice.

Keep in mind that tax season is just around the corner, and this donation would make for a nice deduction. (You will receive a receipt from BKHS for your records. Please contact me at this email address ab2nm@yahoo.com or 671-2936 (h).

Incidentally, I see this as a 'foot-in-the-door' for getting a ham radio club started in the school. The way I see it, word will get out to the other language teachers, then to the math and science departments, etc. Soon 'shortwave' will be cool again... So, if you can help out, please drop me a note or give me a call.

Got Photos?

by George Masny, KA2GPJ

With the passing of so many of our members, I think it would be nice if we could have a piece of the website dedicated to a "rogue gallery", like they have on HFRadio.net

["http://www.tpn7055.ca/Gallery1.html"](http://www.tpn7055.ca/Gallery1.html)

In retrospect, it would be nice if any of our members who have pictures of past meetings or activities, or just simple mug shots of past members especially SKs I would be happy to scan them and have them posted.

73 de KA2GPJ

Notes from the Editor

by Dick Goslee, KG2I
Editor, RaRa RAG

As the new Editor of the RAG I hope to make this a publication that is useful to all the members. I am always looking for news and articles that pertain to local activities as well as amateur radio in general. As members of RARA you are also able to place personel "want ads" to sell your equipment in the RAG, at no charge.

The RAG is also the place to advertise your company or the company you work for. Our "Display Ads" are very inexpensive and there is

also a 15% discount when the ad runs for 8 or more issues in our publishing year (Sept.- June). Contact me at any time with any questions you may have. The deadline each month is the second Friday of the month, for publishing in the next month's issue.

Special One Time Kit Deal for RARA Members!

by Keith Freeberg, N2BEL

Because we are ordering a significant number of kits for our two Explorer Posts we are able to extend this one time opportunity to our members. Your very next kit can be yours without the shipping costs (normally \$7.95 minimum for any kit.) You also save the taxes this one time, as this is an educational project.

What is the catch? You must place your order through RARA at the January meeting. Why? We must get the kits on order for the Explorer Posts and we must place your order at the same time to qualify for this special deal from Ramsey. You can order anything from a BL1 Blinky Kit for \$7.95 to a COM3010 Full Duplex 100kHz-1.0GHz Service Monitor for \$3995.00 and save taxes and shipping! Each purchase must be used for educational purposes and educating yourself qualifies.

Many of you already know Ramsey kits. They are a local supplier with worldwide customer base and they have a large display at the Rochester Hamfest (and many others) every year. Their quality is first rate with a wide range of products for Hams and other hobbyists.

How do I order? Simple! First select the kit you'd like either by visiting Ramsey online at <http://www.ramseykits.com> or by browsing through the catalog. (We'll have lots of catalogs at the January meeting.) Second, fill out the RARA order blank with the quantity, catalog number, description and price found in step one. Three, make your check payable to 'RARA'. (Remember, no tax and no shipping.) Four, turn in your order to the Education Chair, Pete Fournia, at the January meeting. Your kit will be waiting for you at the February meeting. Just that simple.

You can get the order form and fill it out in advance by going to:
<http://www.rochesterham.org/RamseyKitOrder.PDF>. Open and print the form. Either bring the form with you to the January meeting or mail it per instructions on the form. Either way, the form and payment must be in Peter Fournia's hands no later than January 7, 2005.

Remember, this is a one-time event. We may not be able to offer this unprecedented deal again. So, act now! Go to the web page above, make out the order form and your check today and bring it with you to the January meeting. We will NOT be able to accept orders after the January meeting.

JOB OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT

by Peter Fournia, W2SKY

I have been approached by a leading amateur radio organization to solicit applicants for a job that has recently become available. The job involves working with a team of hams that develop policy and direction for the organization. The job also includes modification and implementation of its programs. The organization has frequent job rotations that fosters continued personal growth and enrichment. The policies and programs have a major impact to amateur radio in Rochester, NY. Team members have a diversity of backgrounds and experiences.

The applicant must have an interest in amateur radio and committed to improving the hobby in the Rochester area. An amateur radio license is not required but is highly desirable. The job requires about 8 hours a month participation in interactive meetings plus additional time to follow up on committed action items.

Compensation is paid in the form of personal satisfaction and personal growth. You may be occasionally honored by peer recognition.

The job title is "Director" and is a position on the RARA board of directors. People interested in their personal growth and furthering amateur radio in the Rochester area should discuss the opportunity with a RARA officer or BOD director and apply to the president. Contact information is listed on Page 2 of the RAG or on the officer's page at the RARA web site: www.rochesterham.org.

RDXA Meeting

by Paul Mackanos, K2DB

The RDXA will be presenting a program, by Jeff Ach, W2FU. Jeff will be discussing, and giving a demonstration of his newly designed universal digital rotor controller. The program will be held as part of the RDXA Monthly meeting, on January 18, 2005.

The meeting will be held at Gander Mountain, on Jay Scutti Blvd. at 7:00 PM. Jeff always gives a very informational, educational, and fun filled Program. Hope to see you all there.

Interested in a Chartered Bus to Dayton Hamvention?

by D.P. Dunn, AB2NM

An idea has been proposed to charter a bus from Rochester to Dayton, OH to attend the Hamvention in 2005. Generally speaking, here are the 'rough' details:

- Cost for round trip transportation would be in the neighborhood of \$70 / passenger
- We would leave Friday evening 20 May from a location in Rochester [TBD]
- We would arrive in Dayton early Saturday morning, and have about 12 to 14 hours to attend the Hamvention.
- The bus would leave Dayton on Saturday evening and arrive in Rochester in the wee hours of Sunday morning.

Ticket cost is for the bus only, and does not include your meals, Hamvention ticket, or any other expense. Storage on the bus would be somewhat limited, so don't plan on buying several 19 inch racks and 80 pound boat anchors. In essence, this is a quick "Down there and back" trip, avoiding the hassles and expense of hotel accommodations, driving, parking, etc.

Interested? Drop me an email at ab2nm@yahoo.com **before Monday 31 January 2005**. This is NOT a commitment; merely an informal way to assess the level of interest among the hams in RaRa and in the Rochester area. If you would be interested in multiple seats (e.g. for friends, or 'harmonics') mention that in the email. I will collect the data and present it to the RaRa officers for further consideration.

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Alinco 580-T Handheld Radio, 2M & 440. Also incl. DC Cord and Microphone. \$ 100.00 or B.O.

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Auction Follow Up

To the person(s) who purchased the Elenco SG-9000 Signal Generator and/or the Elenco SG-9200 Audio Generator, I have the Manuals for both. Contact Irv Goodman, AF2K, (585) 671-4430.

**Next Rag Deadline
January 14, 2005**

RaRa Rag 20 Years Ago, January 1985

by Ed Gable, K2MP

The exciting and popular digital mode called Packet Radio was the topic for this month's meeting. The presentation was given by members of the newest Rochester amateur organization, the Rochester Packet Group, now known as the Rochester Amateur Packet Society, RAPS. The meeting location at that time was the 40/8 Club on University Avenue. On the same subject, Dick Groth, WB2NBU, wrote a long and well written article in this issue on the basics of Packet Radio. Dick covered the subjects of TNC's and attachment to your 2 meter radio, as well as packet functions and features. Dick further mentioned that a new newsletter was available, the *Gateway*, published by the ARRL. Further information on Rochester packet activity could be had by contacting the group via Fred Cupp, W2DUC. The Rochester Radio Repeater Association, better known as "triple R-A" announced the start of a fund raising campaign to bring the 28/88 repeater into the 1980's. The goal was to obtain enough funds to purchase an RC-850 controller to greatly enhance repeater operation. Dave Bernheisel, N2DPF, was heading up this year's RaRa Winter Fun-Fest held on February 9th at Mendon Ponds Park. Sledding, Hiking, Skiing and many other activities were held, but the highlight had to be the dessert-baking contest with yours truly being one of the judges. I fondly remember the chore of having to taste each and every dessert, on occasion several times, before a decision could be made. With regret it was reported that Richard Schoenberger became a silent key. Although not a ham, Dick was the superintendent of public safety communications for the county and a good friend of Amateur Radio. A long time advertiser remained *Commercial Communications* of Lancaster, NY. From the want ads you could purchase an Eico oscilloscope for \$35.00 from Earl, W2WQV.

FOR SALE:

ICOM IC-756 Pro II, as new condition and bargain at \$1500. 300W Antenna Tuner, MFJ 949E, \$75.00. MFJ 931 Artificial Ground, \$50.00. Alpha-Delta type 4C coax switch with grounding and gas-discharge lightning protection, \$25.00. Butternut HF-6V, HF+WARC vertical, needs cleaning, \$75.00. Alinco DM340MV 35 Amp power supply, \$75.00. Alinco DM-330MV 32Amp power supply, \$75.00. ICOM IC-28A 2 mtr FM HT, basic, no tones, \$25.00. ICOM IC-32AT dual band HT, with BP-5A, \$50.00. Contact Ed Gable K2MP @ 392-3088 or egable@rochester.rr.com

RaRa Rag 6

Kid's Day

The first 2005 running of Kid's Day will be Sunday, January 2 (the second 2005 Kid's Day will be Saturday, June 18).

Intended to encourage young people--licensed or not--to enjoy Amateur Radio, Kid's Day offers a "mentoring opportunity" for experienced amateurs while giving youngsters some firsthand ham radio experience and perhaps sparking a lifelong interest.

"The personal touch is the most effective way to gain someone's interest in ham radio," says ARRL Education and Technology Program Coordinator Mark Spencer, WA8SME. "Many of us became involved in the hobby because of a family member, relative or close friend."

Spencer suggests that Kid's Day offers an opportunity for more experienced radio amateurs to "walk the walk" by doing something to attract and encourage youthful involvement in Amateur Radio. And to serve as a positive example, he'll be putting W1AW on the air for Kid's Day. He's planning to have a few kids available for the occasion.

He suggests that veteran hams take advantage of the opportunity Kid's Day presents to invite their own youngsters, the neighbors' kids, nieces, nephews or grandkids to get on the air and talk with other kids via Amateur Radio.

Farther north in New Hampshire, perennial Kid's Day promoters Peter and Jeanne Schipelliti, W1DAD and K1MOM, plan to be on the air from special event station K1D during the week before and the week after Kid's Day. The Schipellitits have three youngsters, and the two older ones--Geena and Luciano--are old hands at Kid's Day from their parents' station.

Originated by the Boring Amateur Radio Club, Kid's Day sponsored and administered by the ARRL with BARC's cooperation and assistance. Now entering its eleventh year, each running of Kid's Day typically attracts more than 1000 youthful participants. Kid's Day occurs each year on the first Sunday in January and the third Saturday in June.

Kid's Day is not a contest, and patience is the byword on both sides of each contact. The role of the licensee and control operator is to guide youngsters with the basics, keep an eye on the technical aspects of the operation, observe third-party traffic restrictions when making DX QSOs and ensure station identification at proper intervals. In this event, it's contact quality, not quantity, that counts.

Kid's Day will run from 1800 to 2400 UTC, and there's no limit on operating time. The

recommended exchange is name, age, location and favorite color. Stations may work the same station again if an operator has changed. Call "CQ Kid's Day."

Suggested frequencies are 14.270-14.300, 21.350-21.400 and 28.380-28.400 MHz plus 2 meter repeater frequencies, (with permission from the repeater's sponsor). Guidelines for this event are available on the ARRL Web site.

All participants are eligible to receive a colorful certificate. Visit the ARRL Kid's Day Survey page to complete a short survey and post your comments. You will then have access to download the certificate page. Or you can send a 9x12 SASE to Boring Amateur Radio Club, PO Box 1357, Boring, OR 97009

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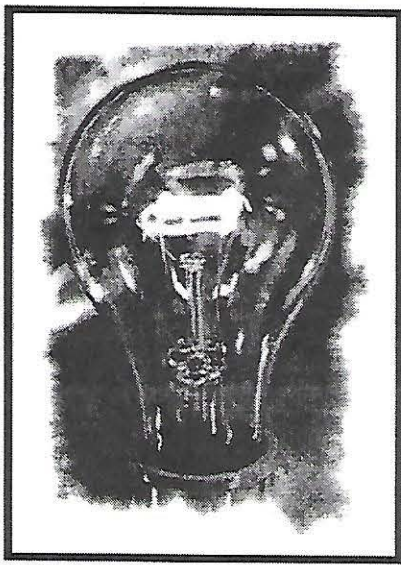
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